

HOUSE RESOLUTION 119
By Langster

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Ashley Lee Earley on her outstanding basketball career.

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee and the members of this General Assembly take great pride in the accomplishments of those inspirational athletes who hail from Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, one such athlete is Ashley Lee Earley of Memphis, who proved herself to be one of the greatest players in the history of the Vanderbilt University women's basketball program; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Earley's success in the realm of college basketball was definitely foreshadowed by her dominance in Tennessee high school basketball where she led her Briarcrest High School basketball squad to the Tennessee Division II State Tournament four times, winning two titles and two runner-up titles while being named all-tournament all four years and Most Valuable Player her freshman and senior years; and

WHEREAS, the all-time leading scorer in the history of Briarcrest High School with 2,700 points, Ashley Earley was named Miss Basketball in Division II in 2001, a 2001 *Parade* First Team All-American, a 2001 *USA Today* Second Team All-American, a 2001 AP and Tennessee Sportswriters All-State selection, and the 2001 Best of the Preps Player of the Year in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, a fierce competitor with the true heart of a champion, Ashley Earley arrived at Vanderbilt prepared to play the guard position as recruited by then Coach Jim Foster, but after suffering a knee injury, the new coaching staff, under Head Coach Melanie Balcomb, offered her the challenge of becoming a post player; and

WHEREAS, the impact of moving the 5 foot 10 inch Ashley under the basket, against the best conference competition in the land, would prove a genius stroke. With her superior

quickness and amazing strength, Ashley Earley lead the SEC with 14 double-double games during the 2004-05 season and was named All-SEC First Team, All-SEC Tournament, and WBCA Region 3 Kodak All-American; and

WHEREAS, because Ashley Earley believed in herself and trusted her coaches, no Commodore fan was surprised to see her named a candidate for the Naismith Player of the Year Trophy and the John R. Wooden Award, winning proper recognition for the heart, soul and desire she displayed everyday in workouts, practice, and regular games; and

WHEREAS, during her incredible Senior season, Ashley led the Commodores in steals, 70; points scored per game, 18.4; and rebounds per game, 9.4; she averaged 17.4 points per game and 10.4 rebounds per game in SEC play alone and led her team, the SEC and placed third in the nation with her astonishing 64% field goal percentage; and

WHEREAS, Ashley's remarkable Senior campaign was forecast, most appropriately, during the second half of the SEC Tournament Championship at Gaylord Entertainment Center against the Lady Bulldogs of Georgia, as she came off the bench to spark the team from a 16 point deficit to a six point victory by posting a near double-double, 10 points and 9 rebounds, to claim the victory; and

WHEREAS, Commodore fans will long treasure the memories of Ashley Earley's exemplary basketball skills such as her last second game-tying launch from just inside the three-point line against Georgia in Athens that sent the game into overtime, and a Vandy victory, which won her "Best Actress" recognition from ESPN for that great poker face reaction and the last second lay-up off a picture perfect long lob pass from fellow Senior Captain Abi Ramsey to clinch the victory against favored Kansas State in the NCAA tournament; and

WHEREAS, named winner of the Commodore Award for Most Valuable Player on the women's team for 2004-05, Ashley finished her Vandy career 15th on the all-time charts in scoring with 1382 points; 10th in rebounds with 811; 4th in field goal percentage, .578; and 2nd in the number of games played in school history, 135, only two behind former teammate and All-American Chantelle Anderson; and

WHEREAS, a member of the SEC Honor Roll and the "Good Works" Team, Ashley Earley is a proven champion on and off the basketball court. During her years wearing the

Commodore Black and Gold, she has helped lead her team to four consecutive NCAA Tournament appearances, back to back Sweet Sixteen appearances, one Elite Eight appearance and two SEC Tournament Championships, in 2002 and 2004; and

WHEREAS, recognized for her amazing talent from among thousands of players across the country, basketball fans were thrilled when Ms. Earley was selected as the 29th pick in the Women's National Basketball Association 2005 draft by the Indiana Fever; and

WHEREAS, with plans to hopefully play professional basketball for years to come, sometime in the distant future, Ashley plans to attend law school to pursue what will undoubtedly be the beginning of an extraordinary legal career; and

WHEREAS, on and off the court she enjoys the support of her biggest fans, her loving family: parents, Lee and Linda Earley, and her sister, Katrina; and

WHEREAS, her success both on the court and off is truly indicative of the highly successful future that awaits Ashley Earley; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we should pay tribute to Ashley Earley for her remarkable achievements and athletic prowess; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor and congratulate Ashley Lee Earley on her many achievements and awards, salute her dedication to athletics and academics, and wish her the best in her every future endeavor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.